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# LINDA CONNOR & ZHAN WANG

## *Speak to the Stones, and the Stars Answer*

**On View: March 1 - June 2, 2018**

**Opening Reception: Thursday, March 1, 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm**

Haines Gallery is proud to present ***Speak to the Stones, and the Stars Answer***, an exhibition bringing together the recent photography of **Linda Connor** and sculptures by **Zhan Wang**. The exhibition's title, taken from a poem by Theodore Roethke (1908-1963), suggests a bridge between geology and cosmology and, more generally, the interconnectedness of all matter. Looking to the sky and the earth, *Speak to the Stones, and the Stars Answer* considers our place in a world in which history is measured in both minutes and millennia, writ by the glacial movements of tectonic plates and the circuitous motions of the heavens, remade by sudden eruptions, forever in flux.

*Speak to the Stones...* brings together a selection of celebrated Bay Area photographer Linda Connor's most iconic images, presented as glistening sublimation prints on aluminum panels. With each ethereal image, Connor's peripatetic practice documents the passage of time and the power of nature to reshape our world.

In Connor's photographs, the intricately jagged cliff faces of Northern India—carved over millennia by the power of nature—find a haunting counterpart in the petrified bodies from her *UnEarthed* series, which depicts figures unchanged since the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in Pompeii almost two thousand years ago. Elsewhere, Connor captures star trails over stark night skies and a series of astronomic images made from antique glass plate negatives housed in San Jose's Lick Observatory—most printed for the first time since their original production at the turn of the 20th century.

Like Connor's sublimation prints, leading Chinese sculptor Zhan Wang's works speak to the elemental forces of nature and their ability to reshape matter over time. Presented in dialogue with Connor's photographs, Wang's *Artificial Rock* sculptures find inspiration in a



Linda Connor, *August 3, 1896*,  
University of California Observatories, Lick Observatory, 2017  
sublimation on aluminum, 14 x 11 inches



Linda Connor, detail from *UnEarthed 09*, 2015  
sublimation on aluminum, 8 x 10 inches

form symbolic of China's past: the scholar's rock. Long coveted by the Chinese literati, traditional scholar's rocks are placed in courtyards, studies, and other spaces of private contemplation. These naturally occurring limestone sculptures are formed by centuries of erosion, resulting in complex, often baroque shapes. Prized as a microcosm of the natural world, such stones are created through the elemental forces of wind and water, representing the historic value placed on internal and intellectual pursuits.

Zhan Wang's contemporary reinterpretation of these traditional forms utilizes a distinctly modern material: stainless steel. In his Beijing studio, the artist wraps actual stones with thin sheets of metal, extracting the rock beneath to create a perfect, reflective duplicate. In recreating and reviving these objects, Zhan Wang invites viewers to contemplate our contemporary world through the shifting reflections of each dimpled, metallic surface.

Taken together, the works on view in *Speak to the Stones, and the Stars Answer* pull us away from the everyday and reveal processes both ancient and ageless, in places where time is contemplated and time holds still.

#### About The Artists

**Linda Connor** (b. 1944, New York, NY; lives and works in San Francisco, CA) is a three-time recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts (1976, 1988, 1994) and the Guggenheim Fellowship (1979). Since the 1970s, her work has been exhibited at and collected by leading institutions including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Minneapolis Institute of Arts, MN; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC; George Eastman House, Rochester, NY; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX, and Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA. She received her BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design, and her MS in Photography from the Illinois Institute of Design.

**Zhan Wang** (b. 1962, Beijing, China) studied in the Beijing Industrial Arts College and the Central Academy of Fine Arts in China. He has exhibited extensively in Asia, Europe and the United States, including the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco, CA; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; Albright-Knox Gallery, Buffalo, NY; Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, China; Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Japan; Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan; and the Centre Pompidou, Paris, France. He has additionally participated in the Venice Biennale (2004), Singapore Biennale (2008); Vancouver Biennale (2009), and Honolulu Biennial (2017).



Zhan Wang, *Artificial Rock #112*, 2006  
stainless steel and wood, 30.5 x 18 x 10 inches